



FAST FACTS

A message for health care providers



Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT)

What is Expedited Partner Therapy?

- EPT is the clinical practice of treating the sex partners of patients diagnosed with chlamydia or gonorrhea by providing prescriptions or medications to the patient to take to his/her partner without the health care provider first examining the partner.
- In NY State, EPT can be provided to partners of patients diagnosed with *Chlamydia trachomatis*.
- EPT cannot be used for other STDs or if the index patient is co-infected with gonorrhea or syphilis. .

Why is EPT important?

- Chlamydia is a significant public health problem, with more than 92,000 cases reported in NY State in 2009 and about 5,000 cases in Erie County in 2009.
- Due to a high burden of infection and limited public health resources, local health departments have very limited capacity to investigate and notify chlamydia-exposed persons
- Chlamydia re-infection, likely due to patients resuming sex with untreated partners, occurs frequently.
- EPT provides an alternative strategy to treat exposed sexual partner(s).

When should EPT be administered?

- The optimal partner management strategy is a complete clinical evaluation, STD and HIV testing, and counseling and treatment as appropriate.
- EPT is an alternative partner management strategy when partners are unable, unlikely or unwilling to seek care.

What is my liability?

- EPT is allowable under NY State Public Health Law, Section 2312, and regulations are provided in Section 23.5 of Title 10, New York Codes, Rules and Regulations (NYCRR).
- Health care providers or pharmacists who dispense EPT in accordance with the law shall not be subjected to liability or be deemed to have engaged in unprofessional conduct.

What is the treatment for EPT?

- The recommended EPT drug regimen is a single dose of azithromycin, 1g orally (e.g. 250 mg x 4).

How do I provide EPT?

- Provide the patient directly with a single dose of azithromycin for each eligible sex partner or provide written prescriptions for each eligible sex partner.
- When writing an azithromycin prescription for EPT:
 - Write "EPT" in the body of the prescription form above the medication name and dosage.
 - If available, write the sexual partner's name, address and date of birth in the designated areas.
 - If the sexual partner's name, address and/or date of birth are not available, the written designation of "EPT" shall be sufficient for pharmacists to fill the prescription.
 - Each eligible sex partner must be provided with their own prescription.

EPT Eligibility Criteria

- All sexual partners exposed within the 60 days prior to the patient experiencing symptoms or receiving diagnostic test results (whichever occurs earlier).
- If no such sexual partner(s) are identified, the most recent sexual partner.
- There is **no limit** to the number of sexual partners that may receive EPT.

Eligible if the following criteria apply	NOT eligible if any of the following criteria apply
Patient has a clinical chlamydia diagnosis. Lab confirmation is ideal and may include: culture; nucleic acid hybridization test; or nucleic acid amplification test.	Not appropriate in cases of child abuse, sexual assault, sexual abuse, or in cases where the patient's safety is in doubt.
Patient's sexual partner(s) are unable or unlikely to seek prompt clinical services.	The patient is co-infected with gonorrhea or syphilis.

What are the key messages for my patient?

- Patients should abstain from sexual intercourse (vaginal, oral or anal) until at least 7 days after treatment **and** seven days after their partners(s) have been treated.
- Patients should be counseled to tell their partner(s) to seek follow-up medical care, including STD and HIV testing as soon as possible, even if EPT is provided.
- Patients are encouraged to be re-tested for chlamydia three (3) months after treatment.

What information can I provide to the sexual partner(s)?

- For each partner, the patient must be provided with (a) either medication or a prescription for medication; and (b) educational materials for the sexual partners which are available in English and Spanish at www.health.state.ny.us/diseases/communicable/std/ept/.

For additional information, please refer to the Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) Guidelines for Health Care Providers in New York State for *Chlamydia trachomatis* at www.health.ny.gov/publications/3849 or contact the NY State Bureau of STD Prevention and Epidemiology at (518) 474-3598 or ept@health.state.ny.us.